

# Birmingham Wellbeing Walk

## Aston Junction to Old Turn Junction

walk time 45-55 minutes  
distance 2.4km / 1½ miles



## The Walk - Step by Step

Birmingham is renowned as the heart of Britain's canals, and heritage hides in every nook and cranny along the towpath - in the bricks of repurposed waterside buildings, in blocked up basins from the canal's busy industrial days and under bridges where visible gouged rope marks show where horses once tugged boat after boat. This walk takes you deep under the city's busy streets to a special parallel world, with the sounds of rippling water, chugging boats and the wild calls of waterfowl.

-  Heading to the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal through the wall on Mill Street, you arrive at the top lock of the 11-lock Aston Lock Flight.
- 1** Turn right past Top Lock and walk under the ornate cast-iron Horseley black and white bridge. The Digbeth Branch Canal heads away to the east, while you follow the towpath under the tunnel-like bridge of Aston Expressway.
- 2** The canal curves round a corner as the towpath goes up and over two historic bridges, one of which has been blocked off.
- 3** There's another 'up and over' bridge to a former basin just before Lancaster Street Bridge. The canal feels more enclosed along here as historic works and new development mingle with greenery on the canal side.
- 4** Standing out from the other bridges you've met so far is the unusual stunning green-painted Barker Bridge. The bridge dates from 1842, is made in cast iron and is now Grade II-listed.
- 5** The imposing 152m BT Tower overlooks the canal and as you round a slight bend, the water narrows heading under Snow Hill Bridge. Just beyond, the first of the 13 Farmer's Bridge Locks climb towards the city centre.
- 6** Almost immediately, the towpath heads through the cavernous tunnel and vaults beneath Snow Hill Station. There's a quick glimpse of the sky before you continue under Livery Street towards lock 12.
- 7** Beyond lock 11, the canal heads under an office block with lock 10 straddled by the building's pillars! Lock 9 is then immediately underneath Newhall Street Bridge – boaters must have to watch their heads here.
- 8** Look out for poetry carved into the lock arms at Lock 8. These lines were written by Roy Fisher in 2012 to mark the creation of the Canal & River Trust charity.
- 9** Your surroundings feel less enclosed as you pass the last few locks of the flight, opening out into the boat moorings at Cambrian Wharf next to Top Lock and its toll house.
-  Your walk, and the Birmingham & Fazeley Canal, ends at Old Turn Junction, marked by the island in the water. Just past the Grade II-listed intricate cast-iron footbridge, on your right is Utilita Arena Birmingham, and across the water is the National SEA LIFE Centre. The Birmingham New Main Line heads off straight ahead and to the left.

CANAL: Birmingham Canal Navigations

START: Aston Junction  
OS Grid ref: SP076880 Postcode: B6 4BS

FINISH: Old Turn Junction  
OS Grid ref: SP059868 Postcode: B1 2NX

DISTANCE: 2.4km / 1½ miles

APPROX TIME: 45-55 minutes

PUB/CAFÉ: Gunmaker's Arms near Barker Bridge, Actress & Bishop near Ludgate Hill Bridge, Queen's Arms near Newhall St Bridge, Malt House at Old Turn Junction, various in Brindleyplace

PARKING: Nearest car parks – Adams Street (postcode: B7 4DH), Ludgate Hill (postcode: B3 1AT) & Utilita Arena (postcode: B16 8AE)

TRAIN: Nearest train stations - Birmingham Snow Hill, New Street & Moor Street  
National Rail Enquiries  
Tel: 03457 484950 [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

BUS: Traveline  
Tel: 0871 2002233 [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

